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Perspectives on the Editor's Mentoring-for-Democracy Role in Publication

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This article describes perspectives on the role and responsibility of editors in mentoring authors through the publishing process. Our perspectives as journal editors are framed by our experiences as university professors involved in editing numerous academic bodies of work within educational studies (e.g., performing functions as editors and editorial board members, peer-reviewing manuscripts). Our review essay is written with the goal of promoting large-scale positive change within the journal editorial culture and greater understanding on the part of editors and reviewers, as well as authors who submit their work for publication review. We provide data initiated in two American Educational Research Association sessions, in 2008 and 2010, framed by the ideals of democracy foundational to a democracy-focused journal for augmenting our exploration. Also included are four vignettes from journal editors whose perspectives overlap and yet are idiosyncratic with regard to their own reflections and lived experiences. This discussion disseminates new research and thought with the prospect of enhancing democratic opportunity through editorial mentoring.

As context for self-investigation, editorial board representatives of several journals have reflected on the nature of disciplinary work that might otherwise not immediately reveal the nature of their underlying democratic pragmatism. For example, although public educational institutions rely heavily on democratic thought, other institutions whose policies have far-reaching implications for K–12 students (e.g., health, government policy) should be included in the research on democratic citizenship (Mullen, 2011). To garner such breadth and in recognition of multiple genres and the researchers who might report these, here we discuss how those involved in disseminating new research and thought might enhance democratic opportunity through editorial mentoring. We build on what Mullen et

al. (2008) shared as the rationale for a 2008 American Educational Research Association (AERA) editors' panel presentation:

In part, editors can ensure a broad dialogue by publicly calling for sharing civic responsibility to clearly explain their publication mission and purposeful advancement of scholars' work. ... editors will discuss how the expansion of their mission has now impacted their response to submitted manuscripts and to the framework in which journal editors have traditionally worked. (p. 3)

We also reflect on ideas from this panel for graduate students by re-entering a dialogue specific to the journal *Learning For Democracy (LFD)* (e.g., the advancement of democratic thought as outcomes for teaching and learning) (Pryor & Brown, 2008). We begin this review essay by discussing the importance of ideas that Popper (1945) expressed that posit linkages between knowledge and a free society. Popper's ideas, foundational to *LFD*, were explored only initially in a 2010 keynote address to the AERA SIG Democratic Citizenship in Education. Certainly, the calls for social and personal independence—dependence proliferate as ecologies of thought and practice (e.g., the 2010 AERA conference theme) are considered central to any discussion about democratic citizenship. The importance of Popper's philosophical ideas and the relationship of these to a free and democratic society offer us additional insights.

As a second step in framing this discussion, we pursue possibilities for applying democratic thought to a practical venue—editorial scholarly service. Our primary goal is to further opportunities for scholars to engage in discussions central to the publication and dissemination of their research. As a framework for this paper, we address the AERA Democratic Citizenship in Education Special Interest Group's (SIG) mission, which is "to promote democratic citizenship-development research in K-12 classrooms and to foster interdependence among citizenship-democratic researchers" (News release, 2010). Two questions we have asked that shape our dialogue here are as follows: What is the role of a journal editor in a democratic society? Can editors reasonably and effectively serve as editorial-mentors?

We hypothesize that the global nature of scholarly interdependence has shifted expectations about the role of researchers including, for example, the need to address challenges as well as opportunities that occur as people learn in different places, countries, and time zones (Lee & Rochon, 2010). The currency of the role of cultural leadership is therefore being called into account; noticeably, we pose this challenge to editors: In what ways might editorial work remain less a part of a hidden agenda and more forcibly assert transparency inherent in a democratic stance? As an outcome, we hope to provide strategies useful to editors and their executive teams and review boards.

Editorial Responsibilities in an Open Society

The far-reaching potential for enhanced global interaction and the visible challenges to political isolation inherent in non-inclusionary regimes (e.g., interpersonal

connections available via Facebook) are apparent in current *worldwide* expressions of citizen unrest. Communication venues serve to invigorate debates about political constructs, broadening opportunities for things such as freedom of speech or collective expression of group will; therefore, civic democracy thrives in an open communicative society. It is prescient to the topic of communication and social access that this discussion explores the nature of expectations and perspectives held within the United States and academic editors internally. For example, as *LFD* editors sought in 2006 to move the journal's foundational home in the United Kingdom to the United States, the mission aims and scope, and explicit purpose of the journal, democratic thought and practice remained central. The editorial position shifted to a United States-based researcher who expanded the board to include numerous faculty members from United States institutions. Similarly, other journal boards, even those essentially United States-based, include a wide range of international editors or board members (see the *American Educational Research Journal*).

We turn to the role of journal editor from national and international perspectives. Building on Mullen's (2011) essay, we analyze the role of the editor relative to its democratic function and to mentoring as an embodiment of that function, and conclude with a compendium of suggested editorial-mentor practices. We also draw attention to some of the benefits and challenges to that role with a quote from Berquist who, in writing for a medical education audience, noted Mainiero's caveat that while mentoring is a time-consuming effort it is also a valuable endeavor:

We don't get paid for mentoring . . . or do we? Our reward is the success of the mentee or, in the case of the journal, the satisfaction of a superior product that we all worked together to produce. Mentoring our authors, reviewers, and editors will result in a product that we can pass on to the next group of mentors. (cited in Berquist, 2008, p. 1626)

British researchers Wellington and Nixon (2005) note and many concur (see later section, Democratic Function of Editorship) that editors hold power to define constructs and boundaries of their publications, not dissimilar to the more generalized and passionate calls for liberty-freedom in academic publishing. Wellington and Nixon urge an enhanced vision of this role so that censure is less eminent in framing or expanding boundaries of thought. Editors in the United States appear to agree, as Stanley (2007) noted, who admonishes the profession [in general] for allowing editors to pursue a "gatekeeping" role. Editors perpetuate an often-mainstream master narrative that situates power and authority in the hands of a few and that resurrects communication barriers. Pragmatic issues might complicate the editor's ability to engage fully with an author during the editorial review process and in fact might be limited by the expertise needed to execute it. For example, linguistic barriers might reframe a narrative where such was not the author's intent. Burrough-Boenisch (2006) writes that many European authors employ language professionals to correct their English; thus, the linguistic editing by outside profes-

sionals could create an unintended interpretation of a narrative—unknown to both its author and the editor to whom it was submitted.

Moreover, Nickerson (2005) notes that standards among editors vary so greatly, that editors and their review boards differ widely in their use. Nickerson refers to several pragmatic issues such as how, *within the same journal*, reviews are conducted, standards are applied, type and quality of feedback is provided to authors, and interestingly, reviewers' *attitudes* are portrayed. Provocative, and yet untouched by much of the research on this topic, Nickerson continues, is the very notion that authors often reap a backlash from reviewers whose personal or research experience differs greatly from that of an author. Vecchio (2006) analyzed more than 800 manuscripts submitted over 4 years, seeking information about bias, agreement, and predictive validity in reviews, only to conclude that monitoring the entire review process is critical to the editorial role.

It is left then to academe to determine what ideological frame might best present the role of the editor, particularly the powerful outreach to global interaction this role holds. To augment such outreach, we provide theoretical ideas based on Austrian-British philosopher Karl Popper's (1902–1994) description of an open society. He suggested that a value of editorial communication and by way of extension the communicative work of editors is to operationalize belief in an open society. It is our hope that this theoretical discussion, along with responses by four editors, might generate strategies useful to a community of editors and the authors with whom they engage and mentor.

Democracy and the Open Society

Popper suggested two foundational ideals supportive of an open society: a government that is responsive and tolerant, and political mechanisms (e.g., practices and policies) that are transparent and flexible (Popper, 1945). Levinson's concept of an open society has been interpreted as

. . . an association of free individuals respecting each others' rights within the framework of mutual protection supplied by the state [e.g., the controlling authority], and achieving, through the making of responsible, rational decisions, a growing measure of humane and enlightened life. (cited in Magee, 1974, p. 92)

However, an association of free individuals is not always easily realized or even, in some cases, particularly desired. As a barrier to free associations along the lines that Popper (1945) articulated with respect to political processes, Swann (2006) suggests that processes constituting governmental power are not unlike the processes used in editorial power. Swann posits, for example, that what constitutes knowledge in an open society should be—if taken as conjectural—available and open to diverse perspectives and discussion with editors. Further, the processes editors follow should be constituted to foster conjectural protections. Should we then be thinking of the derivations of the editorial role as a political process?

Democratic Function of Journal Editorship

The work of journal editorship, that is the *public work* of editors—writing, reviewing, responding to author queries—is not typically considered political. These efforts are less thought of as work framed by ideals than that of some transitory and pragmatic work-type responsibility, such as sending out a call to reviewers. Some authors on publishing (Dow, 2000; Hamrick, 2006; Harper, 2006; Lillis, Magyar, & Robinson-Pant, 2010; Lindle, 2004; Mullen, 2011) argue that editorial work indeed is an outcome of the foundational beliefs of *who*—and perhaps *what* counts as academic freedom—the freedom to gate keep the publications of academic scholars. Here gate keeping refers to the ability to provide access to authors or to restrict their access. We are drawing on Mullen's (2011) work that is a sharing of an editor-mentor's probing insights into democratic pathways of thinking and practice with respect to expansive mentoring-based editorial possibilities. For example, Mullen suggests that we envision the role of the editor as a mentor to the author-citizen who in many instances has experienced such vagrancies of editorial invective ranging from fairness, even inclusiveness, to mediocre treatment and, not uncommonly, undisputed abandonment.

To describe the democratic function of journal editorship, we refer to Mullen's (2011) notation of outdated and traditional editors as "old school," that is, actors who gate keep as their primary function. This orientation embeds a role not as colleague but as one who must—in order to be viewed as scholarly—provide the necessary regulatory mission that somehow fuses rigor into scholarship. Democracies, Mullen writes, should be particularly concerned with this concentration of power for two reasons, gate keeping (1) promulgates—the *who* of who gets published, and (2) frames the ensuing public norm of what constitutes the knowledges of importance.

Authors learn from their editors; they quickly read their own reviews and those of colleagues. They learn what to write and how to write it—yet inequities continue. The enculturation of journal work, such as peer review processes that limit communication with authors and that perpetuate particular knowledges (Raelin, 2008) challenge Popper's call to the open society. Mullen's (2011) review essay and her foundational work for this current paper suggest that we evoke the ideals of an open society by urging editors and other leaders associated with publication to critically investigate their practices and discuss them publicly. We suggest that an untying of the regulatory knot of journal editing could promote the vitality inherent in the role, and stimulate challenges to power inequities and other status quo-maintaining practices.

The suggestion for transparency and editorial support is not unprecedented in the United States and worldwide publication genre. Policies that promote both excellence and equity have long appeared in the literature. Pinar's founding of the *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* (circa 1970s) is but one example of editors turning their attention to their own policies that affect democratic community development and the inclusion of marginalized populations in critically important roles of leadership

and service (Brown, Irby, & Yang, 2008). Visionary direction emanates from editors of many journals as they intentionally address cultural and institutional forces that shape the scholarly processes of their work (e.g., Mullen et al., 2008; Scheurich et al., 2004). Unsurprisingly, access and advantage of unbridling ritual continue to litter the pathway of democratic opportunity. An ideology that better aligns the editorial role with democratic goals such as the protection and perpetuation of ideals and practices supportive of liberty, social justice, and equality offers a new way of thinking that is propelled by open, inclusionary practices. Such a shift can provide editors with a genre that disentangles them from the regulatory function of gatekeeper (Brown et al., 2008), which might legitimize the groundswell of authors who have long been disadvantaged by exclusionary practices inherent in patriarchal processes.

Democratic Editorial Practices

What are some of the practices of a democratic minded editor? In part, these practices could include working closely with editorial teams to include junior faculty members and doctoral students (Mullen et al., 2008, 2011), or constructively critiquing manuscripts that are incomplete in terms of the conceptual framework, data analysis, or some other important dimension (Mullen & Kochan, 2000). Dougherty (2009) suggests that the democratic minded editor is inclusive of global perspectives, seeking dialogue and promoting it. Several of the editors in the vignettes to follow emphasize the importance of contentiousness in their editorial mentoring work. They expressed feeling that they must vigilantly serve as a kind of social justice compensator where authors are concerned, enabling fair treatment of their works, enabling the translation of their intended meanings, and being highly responsive throughout the entire review process. These and other practices are brought to the fore as we offer our perceptions and experiences of the role of the editor-mentor and the democratic juncture they support.

Intentional mentors can promote promising practices of alternative mentoring that serve to both interrogate and change traditional as well as technical approaches to mentoring (Galbraith, 2003; Mullen, 2011). Mullen (2005) writes that alternative or nontraditional practices include cross-cultural mentoring, inquiry, writing, or arts-based approaches, learning communities, mentor-based programs, peer coaching and learning, professional activism, staff development, electronic mentoring. She explains that journal mentors use such conduits to remedy the drawbacks of traditional mentoring relationships, such as the time and funds needed to attend professional conferences and learning from the organizational structures provided. Alternatively, Mullen offers, mentoring could include collaboration, co-mentorship, democratic learning, and shared leadership. *Democratic mentoring* can be a formal or an informal experience of mentoring wherein the editor or board members help authors satisfy their own desire to publish their work, therefore providing them the berth to act on a vision of personal and professional expression.

Mentoring Function of Journal Editorship

Newer mentoring models can enable journal editors to help address deficits in the academic work environment. For example, tenure-seeking faculty, in general, sometimes falter not because of inadequacies relative to their own motivation or capability but rather from a lack of access to designated mentors and, more importantly, a mentoring support system that is beneficial to their career and psychosocial development. *Mentoring* entails complexity in the educative process (Johnson, 2006; Mullen, 2005) that extends to the editorialship roles that involves the support and sponsorship of individuals' scholarly, professional, and career development inclusive of people's academic disciplines and professions (Mullen, 2011).

Mentorship can be seen as a framework of cultural negotiation, adaptation, and acceptance in which individuals with experience and expertise invest time in those who are less experienced, enhancing their capacity for growth and success (Johnson, 2006). Peer-based learning communities can develop from such relationships (Galbraith, 2003). As mentors and mentees collaborate, these interactions can generate new knowledges as part of an otherwise staid relationship of inequities within organizations, and professions (Hansman, 2002).

Challenges Confronting Editor-Mentor

The demand on an academic editor invariably compartmentalizes his or her attentions into contradictory roles, such as explorer-gatherer of innovative ideas and trends, and maintainer of traditional normative social and academic practices. To function as an explorer-gatherer, an editor might give wide berth to the ontological premise of an author's vision of knowledge, especially to those novice researchers who challenge more established convictions (Wellington & Nixon, 2005). Conversely, as editor-maintainer, practices such as deciding the merits of manuscripts submitted for publication could be shrouded in beliefs in the importance of scrutiny and distance, as necessary strongholds of rigorous scholarship (McGinty, 1999). Yet, journal editors act on the authority entrusted to them, knowledgeable and/or understanding of the impacts their actions portend.

Compromises Supporting Editor-Mentor

Journal editors might be more attracted to deliberately blending the construal of their editorial role as institutions increasingly value the importance of mentoring (e.g., Brown et al, 2008). Team-based approaches across organizational and disciplinary boundaries in academe are beginning to permeate editorial policies and guidelines, practices, and activities (Bull et al., 2006; Sá, 2008). Consistent with the belief of journal editor as mentor-leader is how such leadership might recast a journal reviewer's role as critical supporter rather than judge. Taken together,

Munro-Turner's (2003) premise of "mentoring on purpose" and lessons learned at AERA during 2008 and 2010 sessions hold great promise.

To learn more about this promise, eight experienced editors we approached responded to our questions about how their mentorship within the context of the editorial process infuses the ideals of democratic thought in the experience of authors. We next posit their responses as four vignettes, which are the outgrowth of synthesized and rewritten statements that aid in their readability. Following these brief portraits, we offer some initial suggestions for the field. By doing so, we endeavor to further editors' beliefs about the possibilities and challenges that bridge imaginative and democratic civic participation, a role we believe editors hold as their responsibility and stewardship.

Academic Editor-Mentor: Vignette #1

Having served as the editor of an international refereed journal for 8 years and having guest edited 14 special issues of journals in addition to numerous other editorial roles, I felt called upon to initiate dialogue about the capacity that editors have to serve in an editorial mentoring role. Several years ago, I organized an invited journal editors' session at AERA from which several themes emerged, including some responses a group of 12 journal editors in education had about challenges they face in editorial mentoring. While I suspected that challenges would indeed be identified, these seemed to overwhelm the potential for advantages. For example, the participating editors emphasized the difficulty of providing the extra time needed to mentor authors in manuscript development and of preparing others, particularly reviewers, on their editorial teams to mentor authors. They noted a learning curve involved in designing review guidelines and rubrics that fit with a mentoring approach to peer review, as well as the awkwardness of mentoring in a peer-review culture that is inundated in high-stakes scholarly rigor and assessment.

In addition to practical concerns, theoretical responses emerged from this panel session. The editors expressed concerns about their own leadership, since some viewed their role as a very public responsibility—a *civitas* of service. They asked, how might I serve to more democratically engage the scholars who submit manuscripts and what is my responsibility to them? Not surprisingly, the theme of democratic leadership as it might impact editorial role (e.g., a mentoring editor) emerged as the panel turned its attention to expressions of concern from the session audience, many of whom believed they had experienced negative, unfair, or dismissive treatment by editors. We, as editors, found the audience's reactions both compelling and appalling, and we did not believe that we had had a hand in perpetuating the problems under discussion.

As I learned more about these editors' beliefs and the concerns generated by our audience, I wondered if a more current reframing of the role of the editor was needed, and if this reframing should suggest leadership in which democratic

thought plays a more central role, particularly in the power-laden environment of a peer-review process. In an article that I then wrote, I read everything I could find written by journal editors about their roles. I examined trends within the journal editorial culture, in addition to areas of deficit and promising practices. I came to understand a bigger picture of journal editorship, that is, as a tripartite vision that has the potential to compel editors to serve as mentors to authors and reviewers. For it, the roles and responsibilities of academic journal editors from mentoring, democratic, and international perspectives is crucial, the point being that one dimension of the work builds on another.

Outcomes of this review essay indicated that editors need to embrace the mentoring, democratic, and international functions important in an open society. I feel passionately that journal editors need to lead the diversification of higher education systems by eliminating constrictive access and advocating for mentoring as an organizational value. The progressive ideologies of mentoring that underscore such activities feature collaboration, co-mentorship, democratic learning, and shared leadership. The function of internationalizing journals is intrinsically linked to the mentoring and democratic aspects of academic editorship. Needed, though, are international perspectives on mentoring and democracy that can serve as frameworks for guiding journal editors. Internalization efforts have thus far been localized within particular journals and with certain publishers, such as Routledge and Peter Lang. As one starting point for addressing these three functions, I tell stories about the importance of journal editors and other publishers constituting and reconstituting their editorial boards and review panels so that they are more highly diverse and interdisciplinary in scope, ethnicity, and nationality.

For years, I have felt inspired by the liberatory, empowering work produced by academics such as Shirley Steinberg, founder and long-standing editor of *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*. The democratic body of knowledge she produces through her vast networks and sponsorship of under-represented groups, including the reclaiming of indigenous knowledges, has built communal synergy and helped mend racial, gender, and class divides. This intensive level of commitment to an open society reinforces in multiple directions the inclusion practices (e.g., diversification and representation of under-represented groups) of the making of a democracy, while shaping the important work in criticality and critical leadership. I have heard Steinberg call for criticality in scholarly cultural norms by evoking play with the use of “rigor/mortis” (i.e., scientifically based educational research can metaphorically equate with stiffness of death) to force deep reflection on status quo practices that block generativity within a democracy.

Authors share that they want seasoned academics, particularly editors of journals, to perform mentoring roles but that practices of editorship vary greatly. Based on the feedback I have received from authors of the journal I edited and the sessions I have organized and participated in, few academics have confidence in the overarching desire of editors to mentor authors' work. Therefore, those of us

who wish to propel the democratic work of journal editors must work even harder to get our message heard, and it is incumbent upon us to share our ideas in writing and certainly in our praxis.

Academic Editor-Mentor: Vignette #2

I believe the principal responsibility of an editor is to fill the journal with material that is interesting, coherent, and pertinent. It is consistent with democratic values and the Popperian idea of an open society that an editor selects articles for publication that provide diverse perspectives. Similarly, when a manuscript that has been reviewed is evaluated by an editor, such established criteria as coherence and pertinence should take precedence over whether a reviewer agrees with an author's argument. A journal should be a forum for debate and, as such, diverse arguments and perspectives will be fostered.

Although I feel it is, generally speaking, good to be helpful, as the editor of *LFD* I did not consider mentorship to be part of my formal role. But I did take the view that all would-be contributors should be treated with respect. When they had provocative and pertinent ideas that were not being presented to best advantage, it was worth devoting time and effort to edit their submissions to achieve greater coherence. Mentorship, at an informal level, took place because of my editorial activities. Treating authors with respect included giving them a timely decision as to whether their manuscript has been accepted. A speedy decision is much more important than the provision of detailed feedback. Three weeks seems to me to be long enough for an author to await the decision. Any feedback given should be honest and to the point. It is desirable for the feedback to indicate what the author might need to do to make the article publishable in the journal, *but it is not always possible to provide such feedback*.

As the editor of an international journal, I thought it important to publish material from authors from many countries, including manuscripts whose first language was not English. I encouraged submissions from authors with interesting ideas whose command of English was such that their work required a significant degree of editorial intervention. The work of contributors for whom English was their first language also required heavy editing. For example, a paper submitted with the structure of a master's dissertation required significant revision. In all cases, I was careful to avoid altering meaning, and copy was sent to authors for approval prior to publication.

Most of my editorial time was spent working on accepted typescripts—too much time, in fact. What I did was not sustainable, in the sense that I could not find sufficient time both to edit the journal as I was doing and continue with my own writing. After providing editorial service, in time, I chose the latter.

Academic Editor-Mentor: Vignette #3

In my original work with this *LFD* editor (vignette #2), as a United States author inquiring and then submitting an article for review and possible publication in this journal, I found her to be a true mentor, although she might have summed up her scholarly service as editorial work-tasks. The first indicator I had that she would provide an “open-opportunity” along the lines of Popper’s advocacy for transparency became visible to me by her willingness to respond to my inquiry about my manuscript topic. She provided me thoughtful detail, such that allowed me to revise large sections of text. She also acknowledged that she had read my submitted manuscript and sent me reviewers’ comments, again in enough detail to allow me to address needed revisions for a successful final submission. She augmented her comments with summary points—editorial cues. Our email exchanges, while addressing the manuscript details, were also reflective about the journal mission (e.g., what might constitute democratic practices) and this type of interaction was, in my experience, unique. Not surprisingly, I wondered about the hierarchical nature of the editorial role: Should this editor really be telling me all this? After all, she would have to make an editorial decision on the worth of my manuscript as a published piece, which seems inevitably to summon forth barriers between journal editor and author.

Ultimately, the editor decided that belief in an open-society mandates the need to reveal, not suppress information, which might enhance social–industrial opportunities. She published my article; however, the greater impact for me occurred when I realized that an editor-mentor could foil traditional barriers by serving the scholarly community with a broader vision than gate keeping. So I ask, if we as editors and leaders of boards do not share helpful information to those who submit manuscripts to us, are we remiss in our duty? Although some individuals might suggest this mentor approach lacks the integrity needed for scholarly rigor, as a democratically oriented academic, I disagree.

Academic Editor-Mentor: Vignette #4

As a new professor, I had published several articles in the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration’s (NCPEA) sponsored journal *Educational Leadership Review (ELR)* and begun developing a working collaboration with the founder of that journal and then-editor. After having spent time industriously reviewing for this journal, I was invited to serve as a guest editor. This led to an invitation to serve as editor of the *ELR*. The editor had nurtured me into this role, and this experience greatly influenced how I saw my role as editor.

As *ELR* editor, it was my responsibility to publish well-written, timely articles consistent with the journal’s mission. However, in doing this, I kept in mind this primary question when acting as *mentor-editor*: What could I do to support this writer as we worked together to strengthen this submission? This same question

framed my work with reviewers as together we sought ways to strengthen the manuscript.

Consistent with my orientation as journal editor, I expected feedback from reviewers to be timely, substantive, and respectful. Reviewers were expected to complete their review within eight weeks. If a reviewer could not meet this timeframe, I invited someone else to review. Once a reviewer committed to the manuscript, I provided support by reminding him or her in an electronic mail message a week before the review-completion deadline. The number of reviewers who thanked me for the reminder and then within a day or two would send a completed review often surprised me. This experience taught me that it was not necessary to provide reviewers with turnaround timeframes of more than a few weeks, so I adjusted my expectation.

I believe that substantive feedback is necessary to improving a paper under consideration. It was not unusual for three or more reviewers to reflect a wide range of responses, which only served to underscore the importance for editors to select reviewers who were diverse relative to a paper needing review. For example, I tried to select one reviewer who was very familiar with the topic and another who had expertise with the methodology. I often selected a third reviewer whose area of expertise was different because I felt that his or her questions and comments would prompt crucial aspects of what the paper might need in order to capture a wide readership.

Respectful feedback was important, and I was often pleasantly surprised how reviewers could frame the most negative comments in ways that were respectful and even encouraging to the author. When this did not happen, I considered it my responsibility as editor to re-phrase reviewers' remarks so that authors received comments oriented toward improving their paper rather than discouraging them. When a paper was rejected for publication in the journal, I made every effort to provide the author with other possible publishing outlets after considering reviewer feedback. While my responsibility as an editor was to see that the journal published high quality, strong interest material, I had an equally important commitment to support the writer.

Another experience of editor mentoring involved a guest-edited issue of the *LFD* journal. As guest editor, I issued an international call that emphasized democratic educational leadership and democratic schools, but I was also able to invite colleagues working in the area of democratic schooling to submit their work. A new assistant professor in my department joined me in co-editing this issue, a mentoring step that was taken purposefully. While a fine developing scholar, I wanted to extend this collaborative, beginning opportunity for him to be an editor, which I believe has had a direct influence on our own academic skills and professional development. I endeavored to demonstrate many of the principles involved in guiding authors, such as timely, substantive, critical feedback given in a respectful manner, in this collaboration. Such principles undergird my editorial mentoring perspective and continue to frame my work on behalf of and with authors, junior faculty members, and doctoral students.

Initial Suggestions for the Field

From our review of perspectives from the relevant literature, and our joint construction and contemplation of these vignettes, in addition to our collective experiences as editor-mentors and authors, we suggest a compendium of ideas. It is our hope that editors and their boards consider the efficacy of these in framing the role of editor-mentor.

- Use team-based approaches in journal policies, guidelines, and practices. (Bull et al., 2006)
- Institute online or electronic training for reviewers. (Bull et al., 2006)
- Create editor networks to learn how others form democratic-open policies.
- Develop a multi-tiered mentoring structure inclusive of gender and under-represented populations. (Garcia-Retamero & Lopez-Zafra, 2006)
- Provide pathways for authors and other mentees' access to expanded, diversified networks through such opportunities as serving authors, reviewers, and assistant editors. (Mullen & Kochan, 2000; Mullen et al., 2008)
- Encourage multi-modalities for publishing worldwide for which open access journals are uniquely poised. (Brown et al, 2008)
- Demonstrate supportive and timely editorial review and detail in written responses. (Johnson, 2006)
- Encourage author inquiry and interaction, suggestive of an ethic and respect for an open society. (Gattei, 2006)
- Provide previews or informal reviews of manuscripts online to inquiring authors. (Mullen, 2011)

Parting Thoughts

Because little empirical analysis of the journal editorial culture exists, what is known about the myriad roles and responsibilities of journal editors is mostly, albeit not exclusively, informal and anecdotal in nature. Notably, researchers and practitioners have produced prolific numbers of guidebooks that authors use for professional publication (e.g., Henson, 1999) and mentoring program descriptions and guidelines are posted on university websites (e.g., University of Colorado Denver, 2007) and provided in books and articles (e.g., Mullen, 2008). Moreover, as shifting beliefs about the role of the editor envision a more encompassing and participatory global-citizenry, it is imperative that practices *inside* democracies divest themselves of regulatory solitude and report impacts of the editor-mentor role.

In our follow up to this discussion, we have prompted an audience of editors and authors (our participants at the 2011 conference) to respond to the following questions:

- What feedback do you provide to authors (or have you personally received) before, during, and after a manuscript submission?
- What guidance do you provide (or have you received) for revision and re-submission to a journal?
- What challenges or roadblocks might we be overlooking in this hypothesis that the role of the editor broadens opportunities in the open society?

We plan to forge ahead by analyzing responses to these questions aimed at changing the power imbalances in academe and allowing for much greater diversity through the emerging role of editor-mentor.

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